

OFFICE OF THE
FIRST SELECTMAN

Telephone (203) 563-0100
Fax (203) 563-0299

Email to: Bill.Brennan@Wiltonct.org



William F. Brennan
First Selectman

Harold E. Clark
Second Selectman

Ted W. Hoffstatter

Richard J. Dubow

James A. Saxe

TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, CT 06897

March 28, 2012

Senator Eric Coleman, co-Chair
State Representative Gerald Fox, co-Chair
Judiciary Committee

RE: S.B. 445, "An Act Concerning Liability for the Recreational Use of Land."

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and Other Distinguished Members of the
Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to comment on this ill-advised proposal. My
name is Bill Brennan and I am First Selectman for the Town of Wilton.

The Town of Wilton opposes S.B. 445, which seeks to exempt certain improvements on
municipally owned recreation land previously protected with the passage of P.L. 11-211.
If S.B. 445 passes, there will be direct and negative implications to Wilton and to the
detriment of existing and proposed recreational uses.

Like most towns, we have natural areas open to the public for passive recreation. We
rely on a series of boardwalks and low bridges to traverse wet areas and small streams.
This not only facilitates an enjoyable hike, but also enables us to protect sensitive
ecological features. Further, Wilton has a small public beach associated with a
swimming pond. While this is a modified natural area, it is subject to natural processes
associated with storms, wildlife, etc. and as such warrants indemnification.

Lastly, the Town of Wilton, along with four neighboring communities is diligently working
to create the 27-mile long Norwalk River Valley Trail. The vision is a paved trail to
provide recreation opportunities to the broadest user group and create an amenity of
consequence not just regionally, but to the Northeast. Under S.B. 445 this trail may be
considered a sidewalk, imposing substantial exposure on the host towns.

P.L. 11-211 appropriately provided municipalities the same qualified indemnification as
other owners of recreation land. The exemptions proposed with S.B. 445 are
unwarranted and will unduly burden our town.

Thank you again for allowing me to offer testimony on the proposed S.B. 445 legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Brennan". The signature is written in dark ink and has a horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

William F. Brennan
First Selectman